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Media Contact: Rebecca Dreilinger 202-225-8203

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Washington, D.C. – Rep. Luis V. Gutierrez (D-IL) today joins residents across the Fourth District and the entire country in celebrating Earth Day, pledging to continue his work in Congress to protect the environment, fight global warming and spur a cleaner, greener, and more prosperous economy for the American people.

“We have a clear and immediate responsibility to protect our planet and ensure that we all have clean air to breathe and clean water to drink,” said Gutierrez. “Democrats have taken key steps forward, but much more work remains, and I will continue to fight to end global warming and protect our environment for future generations.”

A February 2007 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report concluded that warming of the climate system is unequivocal. It also states that most of the observed increase in globally averaged temperatures since the mid-20th century is very likely due to the observed increase in greenhouse gas concentrations. Continued uncontrolled emissions of greenhouse gases will threaten local and regional food supplies, intensify precipitation cycles causing more floods and droughts, reduce the biological diversity of our planet and increase sea levels.

Rep. Gutierrez has continuously supported legislative efforts to address this crisis. In the 110th Congress, he cosponsored H.R. 620, the Climate Stewardship Act of 2007. This bill would accelerate the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States by establishing a market-driven system of tradable greenhouse gas allowances that would limit greenhouse gas emissions in the United States, reduce dependence upon foreign oil, and ensure benefits to

consumers from the trading in such allowances.

"We do not have to sacrifice economic vitality to achieve environmental conservation" said Gutierrez. "The two are not incompatible, but we must work to be more creative in our approaches and incentives."

In addition, Democrats have already taken several major steps forward by passing landmark legislation that addresses the global warming crisis while creating new green collar jobs, cutting energy costs and helping end our dependence on foreign oil.

The historic and bipartisan Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 has been signed into law and will increase vehicle fuel efficiency standards and help save American families \$700 to \$1,000 per year at the gas pump. New building, appliance and lighting efficiency standards included in the new law will save consumers \$400 billion through 2030. Additionally, the new law will help save 5.3 billion metric tons in energy-related CO2 emissions from 2008-2030 and cut the growth in energy-related emissions of CO2 by 10 percent.

Democrats are also working to enact new legislation that will promote investments in renewable energy, create hundreds of thousands of good-paying green collar American jobs, and end multi-billion dollar subsidies to big oil companies. The Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Tax Act of 2008 would end unnecessary subsidies to Big Oil companies and invest in clean, renewable energy and energy efficiency. The bill extends and expands tax incentives for renewable electricity, energy and fuel, as well as for plug-in hybrid cars, and energy efficient homes, buildings, and appliances. The solar investment tax credit in this legislation alone will reduce carbon emissions by 240 million tons, or the equivalent of taking 52 million passenger cars off the road for one year.

While the House has passed this legislation, Republicans and President Bush oppose the Democratic effort to end subsidies for oil companies that are earning record profits.

"Oil prices are skyrocketing and our dependence on foreign oil threatens our environment and our national security," added Gutierrez. "As the world's largest producer of greenhouse gases, such as nitrous oxide, methane and carbon dioxide, our nation has an obligation to be actively involved in preventing further climatic change. It is time to abandon the failed energy policies of

the past and invest in the future.”

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